

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
100 MAPLE AVENUE  
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, November 16, 2016**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Dr. Dale Magee, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. John Samia; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Barb Malone, Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 7:01 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

Mr. Bryan Moss, a member of the group Sustainable Shrewsbury, addressed the Committee on behalf of 120 residents who signed a petition who prefer organically maintained natural turf fields to artificial turf for the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Athletic Field Improvement project. Mr. Moss acknowledged the amount of research done by the Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) on artificial turf, and requested that due diligence be done on natural field alternatives. He also requested a baseline of usage to determine if the requested usage might be above what is required in order to pay for replacement turf. Mr. Moss also noted that he had concerns about the artificial turf relative to the water supply and provided the Committee with a copy of a map entitled *Shrewsbury Aquifer Protection Overlay District, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, April 5, 2012*.

Ms. Fryc thanked Mr. Moss for his comments and advised that the decision making that the School Committee had done regarding turf was not done in a vacuum, that the Committee had listened to all sides prior to their vote to approve the turf field project with the Envirofill infill product at the previous meeting, and that the Committee will continue to monitor information as the project moves forward.

**II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports**

None.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer noted that the play *And a Child Shall Lead* will be performed at Oak Middle School this weekend, and congratulated all fall SHS athletic teams on advancing to the postseason. Ms.

Banios noted that SPS is looking for school parents and business leaders to participate in a workgroup that will help to define Shrewsbury's "Portrait of a Graduate," or what SPS graduates should look like to succeed in our interconnected world.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

##### **A. Superintendent's Awards for Academic Excellence: Presentation**

The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents requests that each superintendent, on its behalf, recognize outstanding members of the senior class in each district's high school. Due to the size of the district, Dr. Sawyer advised he is allowed to present the award to two students. Based on academic achievement, Dr. Sawyer acknowledged SHS students Michael O'Connell and Brian Chen as this year's recipients. After Dr. Sawyer provided highlights of their accomplishments, both students addressed the Committee and were presented with award certificates.

##### **B. SHS Class of 2016 Future Plans: Report**

Ms. Nga Huynh, Director of School Counseling, Shrewsbury High School and Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Shrewsbury High School Principal, provided data regarding the post-high school plans of the most recent graduating class (2016). The report noted that 98% of SHS students were attending 2 or 4 year colleges, and included information on college selection, special education students' plans, college selectivity, student college choices, future plans by gender, and selection data regarding public vs. private college. Mr. Bazydlo noted that this past year was the last year that SHS was reporting class rank, and that starting this year this reporting would not work against students, but could benefit them because of the academic strength of our overall student body.

The Committee asked clarifying questions about the diversity of colleges students were applying to, standardized tests, scholarship reporting alternatives for non college-bound graduates, and workload for counselors.

Dr. Sawyer thanked Ms. Huynh and Mr. Bazydlo for their thoughtful work on the report, and acknowledged the entire school counseling staff for their effective communication with, and hard work on behalf of, SPS students.

##### **C. Enrollment & Class Size: Report**

Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins presented an overview of district-wide enrollment data as of October 1, 2016. The report included information on enrollment histories, grade level population, Kindergarten to Grade 1 increases, School Committee guidelines for class size, SPED out of district placement, and vocational/technical school placement. It was noted that overall student enrollment was currently at an all time high of 6,191 from preschool through Grade 12, SHS's enrollment was 124 students greater than the previous year, and special education out-of-district placements and vocational enrollment were lower than in recent years.

In response to clarifying questions from the Committee on fewer SHS students being admitted to Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School (AVRTHS), Mr. Collins noted that AVRTHS was not currently interested in adding member communities, and that there are significant costs to districts who are member communities. Mr. Collins advised that SPS would look at programs that could be created to meet student needs (hotel management programs, for example) that do not require additional physical space or a large equipment expenditures, and Dr. Sawyer noted the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) program curriculum which provides students with a hands on, practical introduction to the field of engineering.

Mr. Gregory Nevader, Assistant Principal, Shrewsbury High School, and Mr. Bazydlo presented an overview of Shrewsbury High School enrollment and class size by department. The report included information on diversifying student populations, building capacity, enrollment versus Teaching FTEs, student-teacher ratios, class size, teacher caseloads, counselor caseloads, and considerations regarding increasing enrollment.

The Committee asked clarifying questions about space, class size, school counselor and assistant principal caseloads, and students moving to Shrewsbury from other areas of the country. Mr. Bazydlo noted that while the recent override provided relief, SHS was beginning to see an uptick in class sizes and student caseloads for teachers and counselors. He added that study halls were currently held in classrooms and that moving them to a common area could free up academic spaces. Mr. Nevader noted that student initiative is a significant factor in determining interaction with guidance counselors. Mr. Bazydlo advised that some students had significant social and emotional needs, and commended Assistant Principals at SHS for doing a great job looping with students as one means of managing their large caseloads.

Dr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Bazydlo and Mr. Nevader for their report, acknowledged that the population spike at SHS would present some challenges, noting that it is the ability for assistant principals and staff to build relationships that is the most critical factor to ensuring the safety of students and schools.

## **V. Curriculum**

### **VI. Policy**

#### **A. Revised Policy on Fingerprint Background Checks: Second Reading & Vote**

Mr. Wensky noted that the Department for Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released updated guidance regarding policies governing fingerprint based background checks, especially around procedures. One significant change was the addition of a Local Security Agency Officer (LASO), a role that would be filled by Ms. Malone. Mr. Wensky noted that a first reading of Policy 635A was held at the School Committee meeting on November 9, 2016, and that the Committee had received no public feedback. Dr. Sawyer recommended approval of the revised policy.

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Revised School Committee Policy 635A on Fingerprint-Based Criminal History Record Information Background Checks.

### **B. Revised Policy on Physical Restraint of Students: Second Reading & Vote**

Mr. Wensky noted that the existing School Committee Policy 325 on Physical Restraint was updated to provide more detail on procedures so as to be in compliance with new DESE requirements for handling specific situations. Mr. Wensky noted that a first reading of Policy 325 was held at the School Committee meeting on November 9, 2016, and that the Committee had received no public feedback. Dr. Sawyer recommended approval of the revised policy.

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Revised School Committee Policy 325 on Physical Restraint of Students.

### **C. Revised Policy on Substance Abuse & Education: Second Reading & Vote**

Mr. Wensky noted that Policy 751 on Substance Abuse and Education was being updated to reflect model policy from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), and to make the language more contemporary. Revised School Committee Policy 751 addresses Substance Abuse. A first reading of Policy 751 was held at the School Committee meeting on November 9, 2016, and referenced Policy 751a, which was subsequently changed to Policy 542. New School Committee Policy 542 addresses *Education* on Substance Abuse, and Dr. Sawyer added that the number 542 was used to reflect its status as an Education Policy. The Committee did not receive any public feedback.

A first reading of Policy 751 was held at the School Committee meeting on November 9, 2016, but referenced Policy 751a, which was subsequently changed to Policy 542. On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Mr. Samia, the Committee voted unanimously to approve a Revised Policy 751 on Prohibition of the Use of Alcohol, Tobacco/Nicotine, and Drugs by Students, and a new Policy 542: Prevention Education Regarding of the Use of Alcohol, Tobacco/Nicotine, and Drugs by Students.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Beal Early Childhood Center Building Project Town Meeting Recommendation: Vote**

Mr. Collins noted that a Special Town Meeting (STM) will convene on December 5, 2016 to vote on Warrant Article 5, which would appropriate funds for the Beal Early Childhood Project Feasibility Study, and recommended that the Committee vote to affirm their support of Article 5 in advance of the STM. He added that it is expected that the recommended amount will be \$1.2 million and that the 50.16% reimbursement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] will apply so the town's net cost would be +/- \$600,000 if the appropriation were fully

expended. Mr. Collins also noted that interested community members can attend an Open House at Beal on November 29, 2016 at 7:30 pm.

Dr. Sawyer recommended that the Committee vote to affirm their support for Warrant Article 5.

On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to support Article 5 on the December 5, 2016 Special Town Meeting Warrant that would provide \$1.2 million in funding for the Beal Early Childhood Center Feasibility Study and allow the community to move into Module 2 of the MSBA building process.

#### **B. Athletic Sponsorship Funding from Central One Federal Credit Union: Vote to accept**

Dr. Sawyer advised that Central One Federal Credit Union (COFCU) had donated \$20,000 to support the Athletics Program and thanked COFCU for their generous support of our athletes and the program. Dr. Sawyer noted that as per School Committee policy a vote was required to accept the donation, and recommended that the Committee vote to accept the donation.

On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to accept the donation of \$20,000 from Central One Federal Credit Union for Athletic Sponsorship Funding.

### **VIII. Old Business**

### **IX. New Business**

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

### **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with Unit A, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, on a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:52 pm.

### **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Samia, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. SHS Future Plans Report
2. PreK-12 Enrollment/PreK -8 Class Size Report
3. SHS Class Size Report Narrative
4. SHS Class Size Report Counselor Caseloads
5. SHS Class Size Report SPED Caseloads
6. SHS Class Size Report Spreadsheet by Department
7. Background Checks - Revised School Policy 635A
8. Physical Restraint - Revised School Policy 325
9. Revised School Policy 751 - Drug & Alcohol Use
10. Proposed School Policy 542 - Education/Drug & Alcohol Use
11. Beal Feasibility Study Memo
12. Enrollment Presentation Slides
13. SHS Future Plans Slides
14. SHS Class Size Slides